

CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA  
**COUNCIL POLICY**

CURRENT

SUBJECT: PLACEMENT OF WIRE COMMUNICATIONS IN SEWER AND STORM  
WATER PIPES  
POLICY NO: 600-44  
EFFECTIVE DATE: May 14, 2002

**BACKGROUND:**

The recent increase in the number of telecommunication providers and technological advancement have resulted in increased trenching of City streets to install high-speed fiber optic cable. To reduce excavation, it has been suggested that fiber optic cable could be safely installed in City sewer and storm water pipes. The San Diego City Council has expressed concern that the efficiency and integrity of the sewer and storm water conveyance systems could be compromised by wire communications if such use were permitted, endangering public health and safety.

**PURPOSE AND INTENT:**

The purpose and intent of this policy is to establish criteria for the installation of wire communications within City sewer and storm water pipes which safeguard public health and safety while recognizing the advantages of such installation over trenching of City streets.

**POLICY:**

The primary purpose of the sewer and storm water conveyance systems is the safe transportation and treatment of wastewater and storm water. In light of that purpose, the following criteria for installation of Wire Communications in sewer and storm water pipes is adopted.

- A. Interpretation. Terms used in this policy should be interpreted consistent with their definitions in the Federal Telecommunications Act, as amended on February 8, 1996.

“Wire Communications” means any wires, cables, facilities, apparatus, instrumentalities and services (among other things, the receipt, forwarding, and delivery of communications) necessary or incidental to the transmission of writings, signs, signals, pictures, or sounds of all kinds by aid of wire, cable, or other like connection between the points of origin and reception of such transmission.

“Telecommunication Service” means the offering of telecommunications for a fee directly to the public, or to such classes of users as to be effectively available directly to the public, regardless of the facility used.

- B. Installation Methods. The City does not permit installation of Wire Communications in sewer or storm water pipes by any means which penetrate the inner surface of the pipe or liner (e.g. hooks,

bolts, or screws), except in manholes for junction boxes or as otherwise authorized by the City.

- C. Flow Capacity. Wire Communications may not be installed in any pipe where such installation would reduce the flow capacity of the pipe by more than two percent. If Wire Communications already exist in the pipe, any new installation may not, in combination with the existing installation, reduce the flow capacity of the pipe by more than two percent. All conduit, fastening mechanisms, and other components of the installation are included when measuring the reduction in flow capacity.
- D. Permitted Uses. Any entity owning Wire Communications in the sewer or storm water systems may not provide cable, data, broadband, or telecommunication service directly to the public through or using those Wire Communications, in whole or in part. Any entity owning Wire Communications in sewer or storm water systems may lease the Wire Communications to other entities, who in turn provide cable, data, broadband, and telecommunication services to the public.

HISTORY:

Adopted by Resolution R-296498      05/14/2002